

IN THE DRAWINGS:

Please amend Figs. 1, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 5A and 17 as illustrated on the marked up copies thereof. Replacement drawings are also provided.

REMARKS

I. Introduction

In response to the pending Office Action, Applicants have amended Figs. 1, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 5A and 17 so as to address the objection to the drawings set forth in the Office Action. With regard to the objection to Fig. 3B for not having a corresponding description of elements 27 and 29 in the specification, it is noted that elements 27 and 29 are described on page 7 of the specification in conjunction with Figs. 2A. These are the same elements illustrated in Fig. 3B, which is why the same reference numerals were utilized. As such, it is respectfully submitted that these elements are adequately described in the specification and no further amendments are required.

For the reasons set forth below, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are patentable over the cited prior art references.

II. The Rejection Of The Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-3, 5-11, 13-19, 21-27 and 29-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by USP No. 6,553,562 to Capodieci. Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are patentable over Capodieci for at least the following reasons.

As recited by each of the pending independent claims, the present invention relates to a novel method of reducing lens flare by utilizing a sub-resolution grating block (SGB) in the background areas of the mask design. Importantly, the SGB comprises a plurality of non-resolvable shielding lines disposed in the background portion of the mask, *which have an orientation orthogonal to the features being imaged by the given mask*. For example, in the vertical component mask, which images vertical features, horizontally aligned sub-resolution features are disposed in the background areas of the mask. By placing the sub-resolution

features orthogonally to the features being imaged in the dipole process, the sub-resolution features perform the function of flare reduction, yet the likelihood of the sub-resolution features being imaged is minimal. Thus, the present invention provides a simple and effective method of reducing lens flare, which advantageously does not increase the number of masks necessary for the imaging process.

Turning to the cited prior art reference, Capodieci, it is clear that this reference does not disclose or suggest disposing sub-resolution features in the background areas of the mask which have an orientation orthogonal to the features being imaged by the given mask in the dipole imaging process. At best, the reference discloses utilizing sub-resolution scattering bars adjacent edges to be imaged in a given mask. However, such scattering bars would extend parallel to the feature being imaged, not orthogonal to the feature. Furthermore, Capodieci does not appear to mention anything with regard to the background areas or the issue of the reduction of flare. It is noted that the sections of Capodieci cited in the Office Action do not disclose the foregoing elements of the claims. Thus, it is clear that Capodieci does not disclose or suggest a mask comprising a plurality of non-resolvable shielding lines disposed in the background portion of the mask, which have an orientation orthogonal to the features being imaged by the given mask.

As is well known, anticipation under 35 U.S.C. § 102 requires that each element of the claim in issue be found, either expressly described or under principles of inherency, in a single prior art reference, *Kalman v. Kimberly-Clark Corp.*, 713 F.2d 760, 218 USPQ 781 (Fed. Cir. 1983). As Capodieci fails to do so for the reasons set forth above, it is clear that Capodieci does not anticipate any pending independent claim, or any claim dependent thereon.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the pending claims are patentable over the cited prior art references.

III. Conclusion

Having fully and completely responded to the Office Action, Applicant submits that all of the claims are now in condition for allowance, an indication of which is respectfully solicited. If there are any outstanding issues that might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is requested to call Applicant's attorney at the telephone number shown below.

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To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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WDC99 1221557-1.055071.0267